

From: Patrick O'Grady
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/21/01 1:04pm
Subject: I firmly oppose the proposed settlement in the Microsoft antitrust case.

Hello:

I am extremely upset about the current state of the Microsoft anti-trust case. As a computing industry professional and business owner, my eyes and heart are very close to what happens here. I am ashamed that our government, our department of "Justice," feels that the current settlement provides any kind of remedy. It is not a remedy. In fact, it's an insult. I'll count the ways.

For over twenty years, Microsoft has successfully pursued a policy which destroys it's competition. Companies such as Borland, Lotus, and Novell produced products which were vastly superior in terms of quality, stability, and usability. But Microsoft's wildcard is their ability to change their operating system. This is specifically used to create compatibility problems with competing products. Imagine you have a car: it's like changing the size of a bolt so your competition has to buy a new set of wrenches. The ensuing user frustration always works in Microsoft's favor, and the result is a switch to more Microsoft products. It's interesting how in recent cases (Microsoft Word), they create this compatibility problem with older versions of their own products--forcing users to pay the money to upgrade. This would not be the case if there was at least one truly viable competitor in the marketplace.

They have no accountability, and they take advantage of that. We're all familiar with the ways in which Windows needs to be rebooted frequently. Of the six computers I have at home, five are various flavors of non-Microsoft operating systems, and excluding power fluctuations and physical moving of the equipment, none have required rebooting in the past year. This is proof that a considerably higher quality metric is achievable. I really wish that I could use one of these OS's on my laptop. But because Microsoft has destroyed the competition in Word processors, I'm unable to get away from their operating system. Quality metrics are frequently compared with the quality of automobiles or perscription drugs. While the scope of the application is different,